1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

in his adopted parents' house, and finally ran away. Besides his aggressive characteristics Kurma shared with Tempa a tendency to boastful lying in an attempt to give himself greater importance than he possessed, and a desire for money for its own sake. Kurma was also unique among the adult Lepchas in getting obviously drunk.

The foreigners, the people not born in Zongu, are the most obviously disturbing elements. Tempa and his sister, Mrs. Jiroong,[3] caused more trouble than all the other inhabitants of Lingthem put together. In his earlier years, too, the first Dorjé Lapoon, who is half Tibetan, caused a very great deal of disturbance.[4]

Owing to the very late psychological maturing of the Lepchas it is difficult to speak with confidence of the characters of most of the men under thirty and of most of the women under twenty. Except where there was strongly marked deviance, such as in the cases of Chélé, and the two girls Prumtu and Kondé,[5] the younger people lived psychologically so much under the shadow of their elders that it was impossible to foresee how they would act when they were independent.

Mrs. Datoop and Lumba's first wife were both rather more independent than the Lepcha ideal type of woman calls for. Lumba's first wife insisted on living in a field-house because, although she got on well with her co-wife and step-children, she disliked living in a crowd and having to bend her wishes to the majority. Mrs. Datoop almost openly ruled her husband and her household; she was far more business-like and managing and practical than is necessary for a Lepcha woman. These qualities, however, did not bring her into conflict with the other Lepchas, for they were developed along lines congruent with the Lepcha culture; her excessive qualities were for the Lepchas good qualities and she held a high place in the general esteem. In a culture in which the temperament rôles of men and women are violently contrasted she would have been severely maladjusted, for she was almost the most 'virile' person (in the Occidental sense of the word) in Lingthem.

Mrs. Tafoor was rather more actively unhappy, for she was a woman of fairly violent temper and aggressively sexed; she was in the unfortunate position of a person who liked a quarrel and who could find nobody to quarrel with. Tafoor used to tease her

[3] See Chapter Five, pp. 140–142.

[4] See Chapter Sixteen, pp. 416–420.

[5] For Chélé see Chapter Six, pp. 164–165; for Prumtu, Chapter Eleven, p. 311; for Kondé, Chapter Twelve, pp. 322–323.

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

"I begin with my personal servant Changzhi, whom I have 157
had for twenty-five years. His father was the first servant we engaged on first coming to Kalimpong. In almost every characteristic he was an older edition of the son. He was with us until his death in 1912, when the son, then at the plough, succeeded him. The first characteristic of Changzhi is his honesty and truthfulness. In all these years I have never known him tell a lie to me or take anything that was not his own. I have never kept anything locked up from him, nor in matters of money kept an account of what I have entrusted to him: he did that. He would never take anything for himself without being told by me to do so, and I have known him disobey me in this in cases when he thought it was for my interest to keep something a little longer. I have, of course, known Lepcha servants who could not have been treated in this way; but I believe that Europeans in our district trust the Lepchas generally. If they fail, I believe that it is not infrequently through taking alcoholic liquors. On the other hand, I have known Nepalese domestics who have been quite trustworthy. The failures have been more numerous than among the Lepchas, and here again drink 733
has been still more frequently the cause. Among the young Nepali men in the towns, it is pathetic how many who had promising futures have been ruined through drink.

"Another characteristic of the Lepchas is their generous 241
and charitable nature: Changzhi shares this to the full. The 574
fact that they lived an isolated life among the forests of the 735
Himalayas before the Nepalese invaded their sanctuary made them interdependent. They were not good farmers and their agricultural implements were primitive. Their dependence upon forest roots and fruits, which were got free by the labour of their hands, encouraged the gospel of sharing; and they share everything. Shortly after we came to India we tried by our 'Young Men's Society' to develop an interest in social questions. One night the subject was debt and the cause of it among the Lepchas. One man said that in his opinion it arose through their stomachs: 'In the

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

law, whose efforts on the latter's estate in Bhutan, as I have seen for myself, have already achieved remarkable results.

The standard of living in Jongu is higher than anywhere else I have seen in India; and I should say that the people are better fed than the average peasant in Central Europe at the present day. As a result of this the Lepchas do not appear to suffer from any of the deficiency diseases, with the possible exception of goitre, which are so common in other parts of the Himalayas. Dysentery, however, is common, and is responsible for the death of many young children: with medical help it could easily be eliminated. There is also a certain amount of avoidable disease through dirt, scabies, sores, and such-like things. It is no exaggeration to say that the people never wash; nor should I if I had to live in their conditions. We Europeans have so recently discovered the comforts of cleanliness that at present we are inclined to overdo the washing business altogether; but there is a happy mean!

But drink is probably the greatest social evil in Jongu; and this, too, may have a bearing on the question of sterility. All the Lepchas, men, women and children, drink far too much; and in Jongu it was unusual to find any adult completely sober in the evening. Fortunately, I personally found *chi* a most unpleasant drink, for it tastes to me like a mixture of sour cider and old ale gone bad; but had I attempted to keep pace with Lepcha hospitality I should by now have been in a home for advanced inebriates: the only defence was to plead teetotalism. A little alcohol, of course, does nobody any harm; but unfortunately the Lepcha is not satisfied with a little. It seems quite impossible for him to drink in moderation.

Of religion little need be said except that in Jongu the Lamas are priests only in name; they have no learning beyond a smattering of Tibetan and are incapable of expounding even the elements of their doctrine. The so-called religious festivals in Jongu were regarded merely as an excuse for having a party; there was nothing spiritual about them.